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DE RUEHUJA #0886 1271429
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O 071429Z MAY 07
FM AMEMBASSY ABUJA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9432
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEHWR/AMEMBASSY WARSAW 0315
RUEHCD/AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ 0311
RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS 6792
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 0078
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
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RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L ABUJA 000886

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E.O. 12598: DECL: 05/06/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: NIGERIA: RUSSIA CONGRATULATES YAR'ADUA

Classified by Ambassador John Campbell for reasons 15
(b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary. The Russian Ambassador delivered a message of congratulations to President-elect Yar'adua from Russian President Vladimir Putin on May 3. He said that Yar'adua has asked to be received in Moscow before the latter's inauguration as President of Nigeria on May 29 - though not by Putin. The Russian Ambassador noted that Yar'adua and Putin would meet at the G-8 in Germany in early June. End Summary.

¶2. (A) Igor Melikhov, the Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Nigeria, called on the Ambassador in Abuja on May 4. Amb. Melikhov is based in Lagos and rarely comes to Abuja. He said that on May 3, he had delivered to Yar'adua a message of congratulations from Putin. He said that the Nigerians had asked for Yar'adua to be received in Moscow before inauguration day on May 29. While this was likely to happen, it would not be at the Putin level because of scheduling and other issues. Besides, Melikhov said, the two would see each other at the G-8 meeting in Germany in early June.

¶3. (C) Melikhov said that Russia had held off sending congratulations untill after May 1, Nigeria's Day. But, he continued, when he saw there were no "political" demonstrations, he had concluded that the Nigerian people had accepted the results of the elections, which he admitted were highly flawed. So, he had recommended to Moscow that it send the letter of congratulations.

¶4. (C) Comment: Melikhov appeared unaware of police confiscation of posters with political themes at May Day rallies in Abuja and perhaps elsewhere. Similarly, he was also unaware that up to 500 persons had been detained by the Nigerian security services over the May Day holiday (Septel).
CAMPBELL